

SCPD EMPLOYMENT FIRST OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 10, 2019
SMYRNA STATE SERVICE CENTER, SMYRNA

Present: Cindy Sterling, Chair, ServiceSource/AND; Sandy Reyes, Co-Chair, Department of Human Resources; James Billups, DOL-Division of Industrial Affairs (DIA); Marissa Catalon, DDDS; Moni Edgar, UCP- CAP; Elisabeth Furber, CLASI/DLP; Thomas Hall, DHSS/DSS; Emmanuel Jenkins, DDC; HarrietAnn Litwin (on behalf of Andrea Guest), DVR; Ron Sarg, DCVA/MOAA; Genelle Taylor, DSAMH; Kyle Hodges, Staff; and Amber Rivard, Support Staff.

Guests: Jennifer Garcias, DDDS; Jane Hahn, DHR; and Debra Yancy, Statewide ADA Coordinator.

Absent: Elisha Jenkins, DVI/DHSS; Rick Kosmalski, DDC; Dale Matusevich, DOE; and Jackeline Saez-Rosario, Advocate.

CALL TO ORDER/Introductions/Approval of June 11, 2019 Minutes

Cindy called the meeting to order at 9:32 am. Everyone introduced themselves. Ron motioned for approval of the June minutes. Elizabeth seconded the motion. The June 11th, 2019 minutes were approved as submitted.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There was a bill signing event on September 20th related to the Commission.

BUSINESS

Selective Placement – Jane Hahn, Department of Human Resources (DHR)

The manager of the Selective Placement program, Jane Hahn, reviewed the Selective Placement Program. She has said that it has been difficult at times to get some agencies to utilize it. Jane added that DHR has been working to get people who have the experience needed for the position they are trying to obtain. Most of the people on the Selective Placement program are entry level with limited skills. There are not many jobs within the State are being hired in entry level positions and there has to be a certain level of experience necessary for the job. This can be a challenge for DHR to help those within Selective Placement obtain a job.

Selective Placement works by allowing a person to sign up to be a candidate in the Selective Placement program. After the person signs up as a candidate, DHR agency goes through the whole process and they look at the person's completed application, along with the supplemental questionnaire to make sure they meet the job requirements based on their level of experience for the position. There are a number of people in the program that apply for a variety of jobs. After they are deemed qualified for the position, DHR sends them an ER (Eligible for a Referral) within the hiring system through both email and mail. The agency has the option to view the

Selective Placement candidates and can hire directly from that list; however, most of the agencies do not do this, so DHR has the agencies put the Selective Placement applicants on the Referral List and the agencies will be able to view that list as well as the Selective Placement list. There is an issue of people being called for an interview. When they do not show up, this leads an agency to not look at these candidates anymore. The Selective Placement program is different this year because DHR has included Keith Hunt, the Diversity and Inclusion Officer, in assisting with the program. DHR has been holding Talent Acquisition Strategy meetings and meeting individually with every agency throughout the State to try to move from being inactive to a more proactive measure by figuring out how to gather talent pools and utilize placement for people with disabilities in order to obtain employment. Meeting with each agency is time consuming, but valuable in discussing what they need to accomplish, such as workforce analysis and to see what pipelines are needed. DHR can start sourcing and utilize the programs that they have that could help with employment.

Cindy asked how DHR provides outreach for Selective Placement. Jane stated that DHR has provided flyers in the past, but everyone that applies is active within the system. When an agency has a vacant position, those Selective Placement applicants are on the top list. DHR has social media and applicants can sign up for email alerts of any new job postings. Cindy asked what most of the entry level jobs are. Jane clarified that most of the entry level jobs are contracted (State Use contracts) through custodial employment and Administrative Specialist. The barrier with the Administrative Specialist position is that it is a very competitive job and it takes more experience and skills to rank in the top ten to be considered. Agencies with GACEOs (Governor's Advisory Council of Equal Opportunity) on their EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) and AA (Affirmative Action) Report on how many are hired each year. This year they did not do very well with hiring Selective Placement candidates. Every year starting in January, DHR sends out an email to all the candidates on the Selective Placement list and ask if they would like to update their application (e.g. have you gained any experience, skills, etc.?).

Jane added that DHR is working with each agency in Delaware in improving hiring more people from Selective Placement. Cindy asked if the leadership from each agency is pushing for hiring more people with disabilities from Selective Placement. Jane stated that to a certain point they are helping, but she suggested that there should be more programs to help people with disabilities receive training to obtain skills for a certain employment position. Jane added that some people on the Selective Placement list, due to their disability, only want part-time employment rather than full-time. DHR does have some programs that are assisting with people with disabilities in obtaining and keeping employment. DNREC started a program with Kent Community School that has interns work daily and learn how to scan documents which resulted in two interns obtaining part-time employment. DelDOT has been providing Project SEARCH which has been successful in people with disabilities obtaining employment through internships. During Talent Acquisition meetings, it was discussed with DHR about using the Pathways program in high schools to have students come in and do rotations for different internships through OMB, the Treasurer's Office, finances, etc. Cindy added that there are internships that could be mentioned to people in DVR services. Jane stated that it depends on where the internship is located and that most internships are for college students only. Jane suggested bringing back the Co-op program where high school students can obtain employment skills for certain jobs. DHR is looking at different programs to help out people with disabilities and high school students obtain

employment skills in order to be prepped for employment. Cindy added that agencies with different employment programs do not focus on certain types of jobs, but focus on assisting people in obtaining skills and experience in a work environment (internship programs).

Jane stated that there is a barrier with Hiring Managers that do not understand what a person with a disability can bring into the workplace, what their skills are and how accommodations can fit in the workplace such as assistive technology. Hiring Managers could use assistance in learning how to navigate, obtain accommodations and technology resources to transition people with disabilities into the workplace setting. Training is available online to help Hiring Managers with understanding how a person with a disability can bring a lot into the workplace setting. The training is not mandatory, but suggestions were made that it should not be optional for a hiring manager, but it should be a requirement. Debra Yancy met with HR managers and learned what the barriers are in the hiring of people with disabilities, which are mostly awareness and not more interactive. Cindy stated that part of the mandate is looking at how the State can be more accessible to people. The Commission is in the midst of drafting a report for the Governor on where the State is at this point of accessibility-wise and includes recommendations on how to improve hiring more people with disabilities. Kyle added that Jane and Debra can update the Commission if they have any more recommendations. Debra stated that online training should be mandated for Hiring Managers. It should be updated and informative, being about an hour and a half. The last online training was only fifteen minutes and created under Governor Markell. Debra will forward the online training link to Kyle.

A Commission member stated that there is potential opportunity in considering doing an alternate interview format for people with developmental or intellectual disabilities seeking employment. Those people could use the alternate interview format by having a working interview that demonstrates their skills in doing the job. It would convince the interviewer that they are capable of working and that their skills can be a viable asset to the job. Kyle asked if DNREC has a write up with how their internship program works. Jane commented that she can retrieve the procedure and send an email to Kyle. Kyle stated that Jane had provided him with input in the Commission's draft annual report consisting of the last 6 or 7 years. He asked for the number of people that were hired in those positions, and if they are still employed. Jane clarified that she will follow-up with that information. A Commission member stated that DHR could lose people off of the Selective Placement due to obtaining a merit position, and only find out the job is not be a good fit for them.

Ron added that the State doesn't exempt retired military from paying income tax. There are 78,000 veterans in the State and 8,000 are retired. There are many veterans with disabilities who have skills and experience that could be used in a workplace setting. The Delaware Commission of Veteran's Affairs (DCVA) assists with the veteran population, but there is still a barrier in Delaware. The barrier is that even though they worked one job that gave them benefits, the State does not provide them with other benefits when they get out of the military with a disability and find another job. Jane commented that DHR had extended their outreach to the Dover Air Force Base and National Guard. DHR had worked with David Rich, Department of Labor Regional Officer, that have a high demand for equipment mechanics that could be used for veterans with disabilities to work on. This was discussed with DelDOT at their meeting. Jane added that DHR does hire veterans.

A question was asked about what Debra will do with helping people that ask for accommodations. Debra stated that because she is new to being the Statewide ADA Coordinator, she can be a support person for those people by researching what is needed for their accommodations. Cindy asked if the State tracks requests of accommodations. Debra is unsure at this point due to each agency doing their own tracking (e.g. spreadsheet). She added that a good way to start is by creating a Council for ADA Coordinators and start discussions about best practices or difficult situations that they overcame in order to help with those people with disabilities. The Council could meet twice a year to update other agency's ADA Coordinators on best practices and how to overcome difficult situations. Kyle added that all agencies do not have an ADA Coordinator, but they should. Some agencies usually assign someone to be the ADA Coordinator. Cindy suggested that Debra not make too long of a spreadsheet, more like an overview of two different trends of people with disabilities needing similar accommodations that ADA Coordinators are seeing throughout the State.

Annual Report

Everyone reviewed the draft Annual Report. Kyle asked for feedback on what the Commission likes, dislikes and what should be removed. The report includes a combination of years of information from previous reports, Dan Madrid's old summary, policies and legislations that we have reviewed from previous years, an update of membership in the Commission, and added a clause on other agencies that would like to join the membership. The number of members was removed due to members that may leave or join fluctuate. The Employer Tax Credit was something that we followed up earlier this year. There was a bill that was signed a few years and Kyle had contacted Andrea about the Employer Tax Credit. Cindy suggested that more information be added about Employer Tax Credit and should be reviewed again near the end of 2019. Cindy also added that Employer Tax Credit is not well known to other agencies and that spreading the word would be good.

Kyle stated that the next document attached to the draft report are the responses from every agency to the survey that went out asking about Employment First options. Kyle stated also that we could reduce some of the comments and only have the ones relating to the questions that were asked. He added that not everything in the draft has to be in the final report. Kyle asked for some suggestions of where to put the answers. He suggested putting it on the SCPD website under Employment First. Cindy suggested putting in an Appendix and a link if anyone wanted to view the list of responses. Sandy agreed about adding a link within the Appendix.

Kyle asked what the different Divisions would want in the report. Marissa suggested as a Commission we could identify the primary highlights from each of the agencies. A member stated that some people only look at the Executive Summary and could make the report as an Executive Summary which is also part of SCPD report. A recommendation was made to make bullet points to shorten the responses of the survey and add it into the Executive Summary. Sandy suggested to bullet the points on a scale of priority from the different agencies. The due date would be at the end of the calendar year. Kyle added statistics into the draft report including from previous years and any updates on numbers from fiscal year to fiscal year. Other national and State statistics were put into the draft as well. Cindy commented that the national link is

good to have in the report as well. There is information on employment involving Project SEARCH, Pathways to Employment, and data from a program in DMMA. Kyle will review it. There is blurb about the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program that we were involved with trying to have DDDS submit the application for approval, but it was denied and Kyle decided to add a short paragraph about it.

In the section Other Information and Recommendations, Kyle will add information when we meet our stated mandates, then the recommendations listed in the draft report may be recommendations we want to work on. The Del. Code was reviewed last year by Kyle, Sandy, Cindy and John. They discussed the matter of updating the section that was problematic and limitations in how much was spent towards accommodations. Laura Waterland will help in drafting an update to the section within the Del. Code to submit to legislation. Included also in the report was information from non-State providers such as KSI, Chimes and Elwyn. Cindy added that since Dan's summary covers subminimum wage certificates, that Kyle should remove the KSI section and leave in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Home and Community Based Service (HCBS). She added about including a short 2-3 sentences with a hyperlink for each one. A decision was made that Kyle, Cindy and Sandy will discuss how to streamline this report and send a draft before the next meeting which will be on Tuesday, October 8.

Kyle suggested that each agency involved in the Commission email information and recommendations that they would like to include in the Executive Summary due within the next two weeks.

FY 20 Priorities

- After we list recommendations to put in the Executive Summary, we will extend from there when considering FY 20 priorities.
- Invite different Divisions to present on their programs that would involve employing people with disabilities.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Sandy motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ron seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Rivard
Administrative Specialist